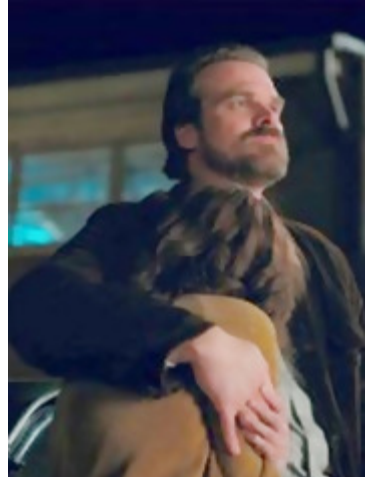




All Over Again by [this-is-allison](#)

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Pairings: J. Hopper/Joyce B.

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Summary: The carousel never stops turning, you can't get off.

All Over Again

Joyce looks down at the piece of plastic she'd been pacing in front of for the last eight minutes only to see two solid red lines. She bites her lip as she internally freaks out and runs over in her head how this could have happened.

She'd started dating Jim Hopper officially about three months ago, after everything had settled from the events of late last year. They were celebrating New Year's Eve with the kids and they had all passed out around 11:30. When the clock struck midnight Jim surprised her by placing a chaste kiss on her lips, one that quickly turned heated. Hands were ripping off clothing and exploring every inch of exposed skin as they made their way to her bedroom, careful to step over the kids, never once breaking apart their lips. They've been having a lot of sex since then, neither of them able to get their fill of the other, but they'd always been careful.

"Mom! Are you in there?" She hears Will's voice as he knocks on the door. The kids must be back from school already.

"Shit," She frantically rushes to burry the test and box at the bottom of the trashcan, making sure it's sufficiently covered, before she opens the door.

"Hey, baby. You okay?" She tilts his head up to look at her.

"Yeah just got to pee." He moves past her and into the bathroom, shutting and locking the door. He still remembers the time she barged in as he was finishing up.

Joyce sighs and goes to the kitchen to begin preparations for dinner, lost in thought. Jim would be over after work for dinner like always.

After dinner Hop and her are sharing a cigarette, him telling her about something that happened at the station, when she decides she's going to tell him. She wanted to wait a little bit longer, maybe go to the doctor first, but she can't hold it in any longer. She doesn't know how she feels about it and she needs someone to talk to. Not to

mention he deserves to know and not telling him feels like keeping secrets.

"Hop?" Joyce begins, her voice shaky and her palms becoming clammy. He looks over at her with that sparkle in his eye that always manages to make her melt.

"I'm..." She clears her throat, not meeting his eyes, "...we're pregnant," She looks at him anxiously, biting her lip and twiddling her fingers.

"What?" He's sure he didn't hear her correctly.

She swallows tensely, "I realized today that I'm almost three weeks late. I got a test after work and took it when I got home" She explains apprehensively, unable to read him.

"I...that's..." He glances at his watch, "It's getting late. I should get Jane to bed." He gets up without looking at her and goes to Will's bedroom door where he knocks before entering slowly.

"Time to go, kid." He ruffles the hair on her head.

"We aren't staying here tonight?" She looks up at her father concerned. Ever since he got together with Joyce they spent most nights at the Byer house, especially if it got past a certain time.

"Not tonight. I have some stuff to do at home." He answers. Jane doesn't believe him, but she doesn't question him any further. She collects her stuff and walks out of the room past her father

"Hop?" Joyce stands up when she sees him coming back down the hallway with Jane in tow.

"Jane, go wait in the Blazer please." He hands her the keys, she looks between the two adults and goes without question.

"I need some time, Joyce." He kisses the top of her head before he disappears out the front door and she's left all alone.

About a week later, on her day off, she's paying bills and doing

chores while the kids are at school when there's a knock at the door. She sighs, not in the mood for company, but goes to open it regardless, only to find Jim Hopper standing on the other side.

"Can I help you?" She crosses her arms and leans against the doorframe, her voice icy.

"Can I come in?" He asks. She doesn't answer, just reties back into the house. He follows her and closes the door behind him.

"I'm sorry," He looks at her sadly, his voice full of remorse.

"Sorry for leaving after I told you I'm pregnant or sorry for being MIA the last week?" She bites back.

"All of it. I freaked out." He moves closer to her, but for every step he takes forward, she takes one backwards. He sighs and hangs his head.

"The first thought I had when you told me is that the same thing is going to happen...as last time." Her expression softens at this so he continues.

"I spend every waking moment scared to death that something is going to happen to Jane the same way it did to Sara. I couldn't protect her, how am I going to protect our baby? I can't go through that again." Jim sits down on the couch, his head in his hands, holding back tears. Joyce is immediately at his side as she wraps her arms around him and pulls him to her.

"You're going to take care of the baby the same way you take care of this whole family" Joyce soothes him, rubbing his back like she'd done to her sons many times over the years.

"I'm sorry, I shouldn't have left. I love you and I love our baby, our family." He looks up at her and kisses her, not giving her anytime to respond. She's stunned. This is the first time they've used that word, but she knows it's true.

"I love you too. Don't ever leave me again." She pulls him closer, never wanting to let go.